

IN THE SPECIFICATION

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In an embodiment of the present invention, the data input device 40 (viewable in Figure 1A) includes a data input surface 42 (viewable in Figure 1A as shown spaced apart from the display device 30) and a removable template 51 (Figure 2) positioned over the data input surface 42 (viewable in Figure 1A). The data input surface 42 is touch-sensitive. Moreover, the data input surface 42 detects a gesture performed by a user on the data input surface 42. The user can perform the gesture with an object (e.g., a stylus) or without the object. The gesture should be understood to be any movement performed by the user to represent a particular data input entry (e.g., an alphanumeric character, selection of a particular application or function, etc.) for the handheld electronic system (e.g., personal digital assistant 100). Tap, drag, push, double tap, hop, zig-zag, and handwriting strokes are some examples of gestures. Moreover, the data input surface 42 facilitates recognition of the gesture performed by the user as corresponding to a particular data input (e.g., an alphanumeric character, selection of a particular application or function, etc.). In addition, the data input device 40 cooperates with hardware or software incorporated into the personal digital assistant 100 to process the gesture and to determine the particular data input intended by the user.

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As illustrated in Figure 2, the removable template 51 (area 51A and 51B) of the present invention divides the data input surface 42 (viewable in Figure 1A) into a first variable template input area 51A and a second variable template input area 51B. In an embodiment, the first variable template input area 51A comprises a handwriting recognition input area 51A that is configured to detect and to facilitate recognition of one or more first gestures corresponding to a plurality of handwriting strokes, whereas the user performs the handwriting strokes with an object (e.g., a stylus).